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ABSTRACT

The political, social, and cultural attitudes of former high school participants in international exchange programs are analyzed. In 1981, faculty members at Indiana University and Purdue University examined survey responses of 57 individuals who participated in the Rotary International Exchange Program between 1971 and 1980. Participants also submitted names and addresses of classmates who were not involved in the exchange, of which 38 comprised the control group. A scale of 28 items measured students' opinions on the need for accepting foreign differences; the desirability of international peace; openness to educational, social, and political change; and the personal impact of the program. Exchange students demonstrated a greater acceptance of and feeling of responsibility toward other peoples. They were slightly more opposed to supporting their country, right or wrong, than the control group. Non-participants supported the importance of foreign language learning slightly more than participants. The values placed on exchange experiences indicate that these experiences brought about essential and desirable personal change. Finally, the impact of the program appears not only to be lasting, but to increase in intensity over time. A copy of the questionnaire and statistical tables are included. (KC)

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THE IMPACT OF A STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM ON CIVIC ATTITUDES AND UNDERSTANDING

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RATIONALE

Two recent statements by the National Council for the Social Studies lent urgency to efforts to develop more effective general education programs. The first, "Essentials of the Social Studies," appeared in the March 1981 issue of Social Education. All of the seven areas of knowledge identified have general global aspects but two are specifically mentioned. These areas of knowledge are "History and culture of our nation and the world" and "World-wide relationships of all sorts between and among nations, races, cultures and institutions."[1] One of the five participation skills cited as contributing to this global understanding is to, "Develop experience in cross cultural situations."

The second NCSS statement appearing in the January 1982 Social Education is specifically directed toward globalizing the social studies because "...The growing interrelatedness of life on our planet has increased the need for citizens to possess the knowledge and sensitivity required to comprehend the dimensions of political, economic, and cultural phenomena."[2] The two major recommended thrusts are to provide students with opportunities (1) to learn to perceive and understand the world as a global system, and (2) to see themselves as participants in the system, recognizing the benefits, costs, rights, and responsibilities inherent in such participation.

Both of these statements make recommendations that are experience and action oriented, yet the greater part of the social studies is still textbook oriented with class interaction efforts focused on content used for control and socialization.[3] This kind of socialization, in all probability, is little, if at all, oriented toward interaction with the global society.

The works of M. Kent Jennings, Kenneth P. Langton, James Shaver, O. L. Davis and Suzanne Helburn, among others suggest that formal enrollment in United States history, government and other social studies courses has a limited impact on student attitudes, behavior and understanding related to civic competence. This study attempts to determine what long term impact a year as an exchange student overseas might have on national and global citizenship attitudes and understandings. Findings suggest that the content and experiences provided in traditional social studies programs may be in need of restructuring, given the accelerating trends toward global interdependence.

BACKGROUND AND DESIGN

Rotary International has developed one of the world's largest and most successful international youth exchange programs for pre-college age students.[5] Annually several thousand young men and women are involved in this program. The Rotary Youth Exchange Program (RYEP) has a two-fold objective:

1. Promotion of international good will and understanding at the person-to person level, and

2. Provision of the opportunity for study and international living abroad for a period of up to a full year.

Success in accomplishing the second objective, providing opportunities for study abroad, can be determined simply by counting the number of participants that have taken part in the Youth Exchange Program; the number has been considerable. However, measuring success in the promotion of international good will is a more complex matter.

The Central States Rotary Youth Exchange Program services 750 individual Rotary Clubs in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin plus Ontario. Approximately 250 high school students from this region now go overseas annually for a year of study and international living while a corresponding number of high school students from other countries visit the Central States region each year.

Faculty members at Indiana University - Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) were provided access to names and addresses of all RYEP participants from one Rotary District since the inception of that District's exchange program in 1971. This group was surveyed in early 1981 in order to assist Rotary in further strengthening the current exchange program as well as to contribute information of value to the growing academic community interested in youth exchange programs.

The general approach chosen was to elicit basic biographical and demographic information from each participant in the exchange. In addition, the survey included several Likert-type scale items to measure internationalist-nationalistic tendencies and attributes of personal beliefs or attitudes. Some questions dealt with mechanics of the Exchange Program itself.

Perhaps the most serious problem in engaging in such research is the necessity for longitudinal studies. Initially the impact of an exchange experience can best be studied through before-and-after analyses of participant attitudes. However, as with values and attitudes in general, the full impact of a foreign study experience cannot be appreciated until the participant has returned and continued in education, pursued a vocation, and in other ways integrated the exchange experience into life. Also finding an appropriate and adequate control group for such a study becomes a major problem.

The initial participant sample consisted of 57 individuals who participated in the Exchange between 1971 and 1980. From the onset it was obvious that a benchmark was essential if any causative relationship resulting from the exchange experience was to be inferred or measured. A pre-test/post-test evaluation was impossible, therefore a unique technique to identify a peer control group was devised. An assumption was made that the former RYEP participants were best capable of identifying peers for a control group which would be demographically similar. Each former RYEP participant was sent a letter requesting his/her cooperation in an effectiveness survey and evaluation of the youth exchange program. In addition, these former participants were asked to provide the names and addresses of two or three friends/classmates at the time of their participation in the Youth Exchange Program so that they could be surveyed to provide the perspective of a group that had not participated in an overseas experience. The result was a non-participant sample of individuals perceived as contemporaries by the participant sample. Since many in the study have gone on to higher education, marriage, vocations, and other experiences, it is impossible to sift out completely the attitudinal impact of the exchange

experience from other influences. Assuming that all experiences for both groups since the time of the exchange would have had similar impact, it is proposed that differences in attitudes which do turn up can at least initially be attributed to the exchange experience.

Utilization of this technique yielded a control (N=38) with similar age, sex and demographic distribution and presumably similar attitudes and values as those held by youth exchange participants prior to the exchange experience. If differences could now be found between the participant and non-participant replies on the attitude scales, then support would be lent to the hypothesis that attitude shifts did occur as a result of the international living experience. On the other hand, to the degree that attitude differences were insignificant, the exchange experience could be judged to have had no impact or any resulting effects were of short duration. Questionnaire returns provided usable RYEP participant and non-participant samples of 39(27F/12M) and 26(19F/7M), respectively.

All in all, the study sought to determine if RYEP participants returned with more strongly held attitudes and personally held beliefs conducive to promotion of international goodwill and understanding of other peoples than others who had not had a similar experience. The Opinion Questionnaire appears as Table 1. In responding to scale items, subjects were asked to select one of the following five degrees of agreement or disagreement: strongly agree, agree, neutral or ambivalent, disagree, strongly disagree. Respective scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 were arbitrarily assigned to each item representing a pro-internationalistic view. Items considered to be anti-internationalistic were scored in inverse order, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, (Items 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26). Average response values to each item are also provided in Table 1 for participants and non-participants alike.

The nonparametric sign test[10] is applicable to the case of two related samples when difference is to be evaluated between two conditions. The only assumption underlying this test is that the variable under consideration has a continuous distribution. The test for overall comparision of the two sample groups is one-tailed; i.e., the hypothesis would predict that former exchange program participants typically would have more strongly supportive opinions and attitudes toward international goodwill and understanding. Only items 2, 4, and 28 showed differences in the opposite direction from that predicted; item 19 showed an identical response pattern. The one-tailed associated probability of occurrence is less than 0.001 and the assumption is sustained.

To determine whether international goodwill and understanding have been promoted is a more complex problem, compounded by the fact that all parties who are involved have individual expectations and interpretation of such terms as "international goodwill" or "international understanding." The executive secretary of the Midwest Region of Rotary further identified objectives stated by members as he worked with the Youth Exchange Program during a period of more than two years, including the following:

1. To develop a group of local individuals who have an appreciation of foreign differences and similarities and can represent this understanding to other members of the community.

TABLE 1-Opinion questionnaire

		Weighted Average Score P	NP
1.	I would recommend to any relatives of high school age that they spend one of their high school years as an exchange student.	4.44	3.73
2.	Competency in a foreign language in not important in understanding people of other nations.	3.59	4.04
3.	Experiencing an extended contact with people in a foreign country makes a person better able to deal constructively with international problems involving other countries.	4.61	4.15
4.	I believe that one should support his country even when it is wrong.	3.77	4.00
5.	There is hardly anything in the United States that I would want to be different.	4.13	3.92
6.	The United States should try to be on friendly terms with other countries who are unfriendly to us.	4.03	3.58
7.	I believe that the United States should send food and materials even to unfriendly nations if they need it.	3.31	2.65
8.	International good will is essential to the welfare of the United States.	4.67	4.31
9.	In my opinion all sensible people believe in trying to be friendly with other countries.	4.28	3.81
10.	When other nations are not acting with good will, it is foolish to try to achieve peaceful solutions to problems with them.	4.15	4.12
11.	International friendliness can be mistaken for weakness and, therefore, should be used selectively.	4.08	3.77
12.	If it weren't for the Soviet Union, the world would be headed for peace and prosperity now.	4.08	3.77
13.	Foreign immigration into the United States is a problem because too many of them do not adequately understand American ways and beliefs.	3.56	3.31
14.	Our country is probably no better than many others	2.72	2.08
15.	Our responsibility to people of other cultures should be as great as our responsibility to people of our own culture.	3.80	3.15
16.	Our country should not participate in any international organization which required that we give up any of our national rights or freedom of action.	2.53	2.31
17.	It would be all right if all races intermarried until there was only one race in the world.	3.03	2.42
18.	We should teach our children to uphold the welfare of all people everywhere even though it may be against the best interests of our own country.	3.60	2.96

TABLE 1-Opinion Questionnaire (Continued) 4a

		Weighted Average Score P	NP
19.	No duties are more important than duties to one's own country.	3.42	3.42
20.	The United States should support the establishment of a world government that can solve international disputes by force.	2.18	1.62
21.	I can accept the leadership of other countries in many important fields.	4.10	4.04
22.	A high tariff is necessary if it protects American jobs even though industries in other countries might be hurt.	3.32	3.00
23.	One should know and travel the United States thoroughly before becoming too involved with other countries.	3.23	2.89
24.	Exchange programs are a great experience but are not really important to one's basic education.	4.36	3.33
25.	The representative form of government may have weaknesses, but something similar to it is probably the best form of government for any nation.	2.11	1.92
26.	International experiences would better be left until after the basic high school education was completed so as not to interfere with a sound preparation for college.	3.92	3.38
27.	There should be many foreign exchange students in all United States high schools.	3.90	3.44
28.	National parks and other tourist attractions should modify their services so that their use by foreigners who do not speak English will be greatly increased.	3.69	3.92

2. To develop a stronger foundation for the process of attaining international peace.

3. To broaden the students' educational experience, including exposure to new ideas and ways of doing things in many fields of interest such as the educational process, social environments, political systems, etc.

4. To provide an unforgettable opportunity for the young person to mature and develop self understanding.

5. To develop leaders for international endeavors of both government agencies and industrial firms.

6. To develop the individual's interest and proficiency in foreign languages.

7. To enable young people to develop lasting friendships around the world.

To measure success in achieving purposes 1, 2, 3 and 4; the scale of twenty-eight items required that the participants and the control group express their opinion on items related to the following areas:

1. The need for understanding and acceptance of foreign differences and similarities--the first objective. (Items 2, 7, 13, 14, 15, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28)

2. Belief in the desirability of international peace--objective #2. (Items 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, and 19)

3. Openness to new ideas and ways of doing things in areas of the educational process, social environments, and political systems--objective #3. (Items 2, 3, 5, 13, 41, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, and 28)

4. Understanding, maturing, and acceptance of one's self or a belief that the program has had a positive personal impact--objective #4. (Items 1, 3, 24, 26, 27, and 28)

Several items on the agree-disagree scale are used as evidence in more than two categories because the objectives are not entirely exclusive sets. For example, "openness to new ideas" is not the same as "acceptance of differences in foreign peoples" but there are common elements relating to an open mind, even though the focus is different. The summary comparison for these four objectives is given in Table 2.

FINDINGS

Cheryl Hollmann Keen[7], in a recent study of "supports for a sense of global responsibility," suggests there are numerous such causes and supports, many of which could be attributed to the students in this survey and others which would

not necessarily systematically affect participants when compared to non-participants. Some of those characteristics include: (1) a sense of personal responsibility, (2) a sense of making a difference, (3) moral and faith development, (4) traveling, and (5) community support at some level.

Kagitcibasi[6], in the edited volume by Grove, found through use of pre-tests and post-tests that at least among Turkish students in the United States, increased worldmindedness resulted from the overseas experience. Our findings are not inconsistent with theirs.

TABLE 2.--Differential responses to rotary objective categories (objectives 1 thru 4)

Objective		(weighted average scores) Participant	Non-Participant
I.	Understanding and acceptance of foreign differences and similiarities (Questions 2, 7, 13, 14, 15, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28)	3.377	2.914
II.	Belief in the desirability of international peace (Questions 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18 and 19)	3.862	3.599
III.	Openness to different ideas (Questions 2, 3, 5, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, and 28)	3.440	3.120
IV.	Maturation and enhanced self-awareness (Questions 1, 3, 24, 26, 27, and 28)	4.154	3.787

For all four objectives, differences in attitudes and opinions between the participants and the control group are considerable ($p < .05$ for objectives 1, 2, and 3). The participants are consistently more favorable in terms of the stated objectives than the control group on every item. The difference is most often one of degree rather than holding contrary opinions. However, there are two exceptions in which the groups actually held opposite views. On the question of sending food and materials to needy nations that are unfriendly to the United States (Item 7), those who had lived overseas favored sending food to such nations, as expected, by a margin of 16 to 6 over those who opposed such a policy. On the other hand 10 of the non-participants opposed sending food while only 9 favored such action. Differing opinions were also indicated on Item 22 which showed a considerable difference of opinion on the use of tariffs which would injure industries in other countries. Opposition to such tariffs predominated among the exchange participants while the non-participants were nearly evenly divided but slightly favoring protective tariffs. If we assume both groups had similar economic training about the impact of protective tariffs on the domestic economy, then the more general opposition to economic policies that injure others indicated by the participants is probably a result of their experiences abroad.

In analyzing each of the four objectives measured by the Opinion Questionnaire a look at the items revealing the greatest difference between participants and non-participants on each of the objectives will serve to highlight the kinds of attitude changes that appear to have taken place as a result of the exchange experience. Item numbers are in parentheses within the summarizing commentary.

Acceptance of Foreign Differences

The first objective, "understanding and acceptance of foreign differences and similarities," was clearly achieved according to the results of the Opinion Questionnaire. Exchange students appear to have a greater acceptance of other peoples and feel a responsibility for them (15) even when there is open disagreement (7). They more readily accept the observation that different is not automatically inferior (14). They feel so strongly about the importance for understanding other cultures that they believe it to be fundamental to one's education (24) and that the opportunity to acquire such understanding should take place while young people are in the process of developing a world view (1, 26) either by experience in other countries or by having foreign exchange students present in all American schools (27).

Desirability of Peace

In achieving the second objective, "developing a stronger foundation for the attainment of international peace and goodwill," there appears to be a less but still significant difference at the .05 level between the two groups (6, 8, 10, 12). Former exchange students were slightly more opposed to supporting their country, right or wrong, than were non-participants (4) although both groups heavily opposed such a stand. Both groups appear to retain loyalty to their own country. However, communications in time of potential conflict possibly would be more easily established by the participants who would be more willing to make friendly overtures and provide needed help even in times of strained relations (7, 9, 11). There is a somewhat greater acceptance of the global community (18) without any lessening of loyalty or acceptance of responsibility to one's own country.

Openess

"Broadened approaches to educational process, social environments, and political systems," objective 3, is also achieved at the .05 level of significance. Both the participant group and the non-participant group--100 percent and 92 percent respectively--agreed that extended experience in a foreign country would enable a person to better deal with problems involving foreign countries (3). Also, most of both groups believed in the importance of foreign language in developing such competence, but surprisingly the non-participants supported the importance of foreign language slightly more than did the participants--77 percent to 69 percent. The fact that 11 of the 39 exchange students lived in English-speaking countries probably accounts for some of those who did not see the importance of a second language, but it does not account for the strong support given by those who had not been exchange students. It may also be that those who were not exposed to overseas study place greater faith in the more traditional methods of gaining knowledge of other cultures such as foreign language study rather than more direct experience that might be seen by some as a disruption in the usual educational sequence (1, 26).

Self-Acceptance

The participants are more willing to consider that other ways of doing things, even though different, are acceptable and not inherently inferior or superior to those in their own country (14, 21). Similarly, they were less willing to differentiate people or our responsibility for others on the basis of culture--the participants were less ethnocentric (15).

"Evidence of maturation and acceptance of one's self," objective 4, was only measured indirectly, but the value placed on experiences provided as an exchange student strongly suggests that those who were exchange students believe much more strongly that the experience brings about changes that are not only desirable, but essential (1, 3, 24, 26). Indeed, the strong support retained for exchange programs even years later attests to the belief that the experience had a positive effect. Participants feel that rather than a disruption interfering with the sequence of course work, the experience was a fundamental part of their secondary education (1, 15). Preparation for global citizenship may be more complex, somewhat different in kind, and considerably more demanding in time and effort than that required for the more narrowly nationalistic orientation of the past.

Objectives 5 through 7

A simple counting of responses provided indications as to whether some of the other exchange program objectives were being achieved. In regard to the development of greater competency in foreign languages, 76 percent of the former exchange students considered themselves either functional or fluent in speaking a foreign language while only 46 percent of the non-participants considered themselves to have similar language competency. This pattern contrasts with the fact that approximately the same percentage of each group either had studied or otherwise been exposed to a foreign language. The figures for the participants include eleven who were exchange students in English-speaking countries. Similar results are indicated for reading ability, understanding, and writing ability. In addition, 19 other languages were known by the participants (representing 50 percent of the sample) as compared with 6 (23 percent of sample) for non-participants.

The apparent conclusion that exchange students would have a greater number of foreign contacts was verified, giving evidence that the objective of developing friendships around the world was accomplished. Thirty-five of the 39 participants reported some or extensive correspondence with Rotary exchange family members overseas during the last three years. In addition 35 had some or extensive correspondence with other friends from the Rotary exchange country.

Exchanges in English Speaking vs Non-English Speaking

The value of exchange experiences is predicated in the assumption that extended exposure to a foreign culture is beneficial in achieving the goals for which the experience was created. In the case of the Rotary Exchange, this assumption appears to be verified. It might be logically assumed that the greater the difference, the more intense the experience and the greater the benefits. A different language is one indicator that the cultures are

different. Often English speaking countries have similar institutions and even life styles. To determine if being an exchange student in a non-English speaking country would make any difference, responses of 16 participants from English speaking countries were compared with 27 who had this experience in non-English speaking countries. On objectives 1 and 4 participants in non-English speaking countries scored higher, while those in English speaking countries scored higher in objectives 2 and 3 (see Table 3).

TABLE 3.--Rotary exchange opinion questionnaire

	Average Weighted Score For Items Related To Each Objective					
Objective	Non-Participants (N=26)	All Participants (N=39)	Exchange Yrs 70-76 (N=21)	Exchange Yrs 77-80 (N=17)	English Speaking Country (N=10)	Non-Eng. Speaking Country (N=27)
1	2.914	3.377	3.576	3.118	3.150	3.493
2	3.599	3.862	3.994	3.607	3.958	3.743
3	3.120	3.440	3.533	3.321	3.638	3.482
4	3.787	4.154	4.262	4.010	4.133	4.216

Also, most of both groups believed in the importance of foreign language in developing such competence, but surprisingly the non-participants supported the importance of foreign language slightly more than did the participants--77 percent to 69 percent. The fact that 11 of the 39 exchange students lived in English-speaking countries probably accounts for some of those who did not see the importance of a second language, but it does not account for the strong support given by those who had not been exchange students. It may be that those who were not exposed to overseas study place greater faith in the more traditional methods of gaining knowledge of other cultures such as foreign language study rather than more direct experience which some might view as a disruption in the usual educational sequence.

Duration of Differences

Perhaps the most important finding from the standpoint of educators is that not only were there statistically significant changes in the attitudes by exchange students but also these differences tended to intensify over time. the greater the number of years away from the exchange experience, the greater the changes in the direction of the stated objective of the program. participants were divided into those who had been exchange students in the years 1970-76 (n=21) and those in the years 1977-80 (n=17). the average weighted score increased from 3.45 for the more recent groups to 3.80 for the earlier participants. The impact of the program appears not only to be lasting, but to increase over time. The differences were consistent over all of the objectives and the items related to each objective. For an item by item comparision see Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 4.--Average weighted score for sub-groups

Item	Non-Participants (N=26)	All Participants (N=39)	Exchange Yrs 70-76 (N=21)	Exchange Yrs 77-80 (N=17)	English Speaking Country (N=10)	Non-Eng. Speaking Country (N=27)
1	3.731	4.436	4.524	4.353	4.400	4.519
*2	4.039	3.590	3.333	3.882	3.300	3.778
3	4.154	4.615	4.667	4.529	4.800	4.519
*4	4.000	3.769	3.857	3.588	3.800	3.556
*5	3.923	4.128	4.381	3.765	4.500	3.963
6	3.577	3.769	3.857	3.588	3.700	3.704
7	2.654	3.308	3.476	3.059	3.400	3.333
8	4.308	4.667	4.762	4.529	4.600	4.630
9	3.808	4.282	4.286	4.294	4.000	4.333
*10	4.115	4.154	4.238	4.059	4.400	4.074
*11	3.769	4.077	4.286	3.765	4.100	4.000
*12	3.769	4.077	4.191	3.882	4.200	3.963
*13	3.308	3.564	3.762	3.294	3.500	3.556
14	2.077	2.718	2.810	2.529	3.300	2.370
15	3.154	3.795	4.000	3.529	4.400	3.630
*16	2.308	2.526	2.950	1.941	2.700	2.385
17	2.423	3.026	3.450	2.471	2.800	3.077
18	2.962	3.595	3.737	3.353	4.200	3.308
*19	3.423	3.421	3.762	2.875	4.000	3.115
20	1.615	2.179	2.524	1.765	2.900	1.963
21	4.038	4.102	4.238	4.000	4.100	4.074
*22	3.000	3.316	3.500	3.059	3.500	3.192
*23	2.885	3.231	3.381	3.059	2.700	3.407
*24	3.333	4.359	4.238	4.412	4.100	4.444
*25	1.920	2.105	2.000	2.235	2.400	2.000
*26	3.375	3.923	4.238	3.529	3.900	4.000
27	3.440	3.897	4.000	3.765	4.000	4.037
28	3.920	3.692	3.905	3.471	3.600	3.778
Ave.	3.322	3.654	3.798	3.449	3.761	3.597

*Weighted scores must be reversed for comparision because items are stated so scale is reversed.

Contrasts in Extreme Positions

Responses were examined in one additional dimension: distilling responses to some questions does indicate that at the margin there is quite a contrast in attitudes. If one takes only the extreme responses (strongly agree and strongly disagree) and compares the percentage in each group who selected those responses, some striking contrasts emerge. Those questions having to do with exchange experience per se are omitted here since substantial differences in response are virtually a given.

With regard to sending food abroad regardless of whether or not the recipients are friendly, non-participants (7) were more than seven times as apt to strongly disapprove of such aid as were participants. Similarly, twice the ratio of participants as non-participants strongly agreed that international goodwill is essential to this country (8).

Asserting that all sensible people should be friendly to other countries (9) drew 41 percent strong agreement from participants and 23 percent from non-participants. Blaming the world's tensions entirely on the Soviet Union (12) was more appealing to non-participants than participants by a ratio of three to one in the extreme choice. Non-participants were more than twice as apt to believe that the United States is better than other countries (14), and by a similar ratio believed that duty to one's country is the most important (19).

Few respondents supported the idea of world government (20). Among participants, strong opposition was recorded by 31 percent while 54 percent of non-participants expressed this opinion.

NON-STRUCTURED RESPONSES

All 39 participants' responded to the request for non-structured information, "Please summarize the impact participation in the Rotary Exchange Program had on your life." Comments were universally favorable and conveyed a very positive, enthusiastic attitude. Comments and key words were tabulated into the following categories:

Development of World Understanding

Over 75 percent of the written comments made reference to the influence of the exchange experience in developing a better understanding of the world at large and of other cultures and people. The word "understanding" was used repeatedly as were other key phrases such as "broadened horizons," "new perceptions," "more open-minded and tolerant," and "unbiased perspectives." The respondents also seemed to accept the fact that this new level of understanding would carry with it a greater responsibility in terms of working for improved worldwide relationships. Comments indicated that these individual understandings fit into a broader international understanding that should contribute to a greater degree of international cooperation among nations. Two respondents specifically mentioned that the attainment of world peace would be enhanced by such exchange programs. One respondent postulated a new standard for international travel: In effect, a person should only visit another country when able to devote considerable time to prior study of the country and its culture. Any visit to another country should encompass sufficient time to "know and understand the people." Participants indicated that they now empathize with other peoples' problems because of having been in touch with another culture for an extended period. One respondent even indicated that he is now "part Swedish."

Impact on Participants' Life

Remarks concerning the general impact on the participants' life from the overseas experience were universally positive; some tended to be quite glowing. These remarks were broad generalities such as, "...best event in my life," "...greatest thing that ever happened," "...tremendous impact." Other participants wrote of more fundamental changes in their basic outlook. For example, representative comments include: "...now view life more objectively," "...a learning experience," "...now see need to learn more," and "...enriching and rewarding experience." Respondents frequently mentioned a desire for further international travel or a college year abroad. Three participants mentioned

that they had even changed college majors to better prepare for employment outside the United States. Illustrative of major impacts, one respondent who was entering the U.S. foreign service planned to marry a woman from his host country and a young lady mentioned that having a boyfriend from her host country was causing problems in her parental relationship.

A complementary section of the questionnaire asked for information on the participants' present occupation. Sixty-two percent of the respondents were still in school, two at the graduate level, one in high school, and the remainder were presumed to be working toward a first degree. This high student ratio means that career tracks are yet to be established, although one-third of the students indicated they were studying foreign languages, international relations, or had included some international dimension in their educational program. Thirteen, or one-third, of the respondents were working; eight of these described jobs with no international involvement.* Of the five holding jobs with an international dimension, two were living overseas and one frequently traveled abroad. One respondent identified herself as a "mother" and one gave no indication of an occupation.

Personality Development

Over 50 percent of the respondents specifically indicated that the exchange experience had contributed to the process of maturing. Among these, several spoke of "increased self-conficence," and others used the terms "maturity," and "responsibility." Some even referred to their own maturity compared to that of friends who had not participated, commenting in effect that they "had grown beyond friends."

There was a strong positive tone to all comments concerning this growth to a new level of maturity. However, the move to greater self-confidence seems to be accompanied by a genuine spirit of humility so there seems little risk that the experience will create an elitist group of over-bearing egotists. Approximately one-fifth of the respondents indicate that they have become more introspective with a firmer sense of self identity. Such comments as "...better understanding of myself," and "...recognize my own weaknesses and strengths," seem to place the matter of personality development in a very mature context.

Developing Appreciation for the United States

Approximately one-fifth of the comments included reference to a new appreciation for the United States and a way of life that has come to be recognized as luxurious compared to conditions in some host countries. Some of the respondents in this group referred to a closer relationship with family and friends following the overseas experience, so the sharpening of appreciation appears to have occurred at all levels of relationships. Two respondents in this group recognized that the U.S. has some shortcomings in relation to other countries, but these comments were expressed as though the respondents believed strengths still outweighted weaknesses.

Impact of Host Country Relationships

Approximately 18 percent of the respondents made specific reference to friends made in the host country. Some respondents clearly felt a part of the

*Of these, three were registered nurses, and at least one of the others was studying nursing.

host families they had lived with and included such phrases as "...lasting relationships," "...got to know very special people." One respondent indicated that the exchange experience had enhanced the ability to have "...deeper relationships wit all people."

Closely related to the spirit of these comments were statements by approximately one-fourth of the participants dealing with the perceived influence they had upon others as a result of the exchange experience. For example, some students felt that their contacts in the host country had learned from them. One respondent hoped his host now saw the U.S. in a better light as a result of his presence. The person-to-person influence was also pointed out in the home environment. Some respondents are encouraging fellow students to apply for the exchange program and one looked into the future to hope that his or her own children would be able to participate. Others spoke strongly of a desire to host exchange students themselves or to entertain students at parties and other functions designed to provide insights into the U.S. way of life.

AREAS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE INQUIRY

Confronted with substantial evidence that formal schooling in general and social studies in particular have a limited impact on student learning, the schools constantly need to be seeking ways of increasing their impact. This study along with others with similar findings provide evidence of substantial or even profound changes in participant attitudes and behavior. There are at least two areas with implications for social studies instruction that the results of this study suggest may be worthy of further study.

The first is, "What are the components of a foreign exchange experience that result in such powerful and long lasting effect?" Some of the possibilities, among others, that might produce these results are:

1. Total immersion in a different enviroment.
2. The necessity of making adaptations.
3. Dependency on others in new and very personal relationships.
4. Learning by doing--required interaction.
5. Confrontation with different values, folkways, and mores.
6. Stimulation from the adventure of doing something new and different.

The second area of implication for the social studies builds upon the first; "Confronted with evidence of the effectiveness of an exchange experience, how can that knowledge be used to improve the social studies curriculum?" Some posibilities are:

1. Identify potential leaders and decision makers and provide them with extended experience overseas.
2. Identify various sub-cultures within the United States and provide extended exchanges within the United States.

3. Build into the curriculum of the local school direct interaction with foreign exchange students and returning exchange students and other visitors or representatives of foreign cultures.

4. Change the content of the formal curriculum to include more confrontation with cultural differences and forced interaction where adaptation or choices must be made.

5. Provide short term exposure and interaction through structured experiences with students from other countries or sub-cultures in the United States, through the use of field trips, tours abroad, pen pals, etc.

6. Reorganize the curriculum to integrate part or all of foreign languages, social studies, the arts, etc. to provide more complete interaction or semi-emersion in a different environment.

This study leaves many unanswered questions about the value of exchange programs themselves. The sample was small; perhaps a larger sample would provide different or more definitive results. Samples using different populations of exchange students also might show variations in results. This study did not deal directly with such areas as impact on academic achievement, vocational success, or long term personal adjustments upon return. The impact of exchange students on the host countries may be worthy of study. Also, are the effects of exchange programs on foreign students who visit this country similar or different from those on American exchange students?

These and other possible areas of further investigation may enable social studies educators to develop curricular modifications that will bring to all students some of the benefits that are presently available only to those who have an extended experience as a foreign exchange student.

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